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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 CU-02

OMB-01 /062 W
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R 071049Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1898
INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMCONSUL ADANA
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AMCONSUL IZMIR

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, TU
SUBJ: RECENT DOMESTIC POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

REF: (A) ANKARA 9499 (B) ANKARA 9384 (C) ANKARA 0007

1. TURKISH DOMESTIC POLITICS WERE MARKED DURING THE PAST WEEK BY CONFLICTS WITHIN AND AMONG THE VARIOUS PARTIES WHICH CREATED FURTHER DELAYS IN THE OPERATIONS OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. MUCH OF THE INTERNAL WRANGLING REMAINED PRIVATE WITH ONLY SPECULATIONS AND UNATTRIBUTED STATEMENTS IN THE PRESS. CONSEQUENTLY THE FOLLOWING IS A COMBINATION OF THE MORE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS AND/OR RUMORS OF THE PAST WEEK.

A. THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY REACHED AGREEMENT DURING THE WEEK ON THE PARTY COMPOSITION OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP COUNCIL AND THE VARIOUS STANDING COMMITTEES, A DECISION WHICH GAVE THE OPPOSITION REBPULICAN PEOPLES PARTY (RPP) AND DEMOCRATIC PARTY(DP) A SLIM ONE VOTE
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MAJORITY IN ALL COMMITTEES EXCEPT THE CONSTITUTIONALLY-

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APPORTIONED BUDGET COMMITTEE. (COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS
COME ONLY FROM PARLIAMENTARY GROUPS, I.E., PARTIES WITH
TEN OR MORE MEMBERS. CONSEQUENTLY, GOVERNMENT COALITION
PARTNERS REPUBLICAN RELIANCE PARTY (RR) AND THE
NATIONALIST ACTION PARTY (NAP) WERE WITHOUT REPRESENTATION
ON THE CHAIRMANSHIP COUNCIL OR ANY OF THE STANDING
COMMITTEES.) HOWEVER, THE ANNOUNCEMENT JANUARY 6 THAT
JUSTICE PARTY (JP) DEPUTY MUSTAFA ASRI UNSUR HAD JOINED
THE RR (THUS GIVING THE RR THE MINIMUM 10 MEMBERS REQUIRED
TO FORM A PARLIAMENTARY GROUP) CREATED AN UPROAR IN THE
OPPOSITION RANKS WHO CHARGED HIM WITH HAVING SOLD
HIMSELF. (IN RESPONSE, UNSUR SHOUTED BACK, "TO WHOEVER
SAYS I SOLD OUT, (EXPLETIVE DELETED) YOUR MOTHER (EXPLETIVE
DELETED) YOUR WIFE") THE ASSEMBLY IMMEDIATELY ADJOURNED
UNTIL JANUARY 7, WHEN IT WILL TRY TO ELECT A CHAIRMANSHIP
COUNCIL AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS, THIS TIME WITH THE GOVERN-
MENT ENJOYING A ONE-VOTE MAJORITY. (COMMENT: THE
BLATANCY OF UNSUR'S TRANSFER TO RR RANKS LIKELY WILL
FURTHER EMBITTER PARLIAMENTARY OPERATIONS. HOWEVER, SOME SUCH
MANEUVER BY THE NATIONALIST FRONT COALITION WAS ALMOST
INEVITABLE SINCE IT SHIFTS CONTROL OF ALL COMMITTEES
(EXCEPT BUDGET WHICH THE GOVERNMENT ALREADY CONTROLLED)
FROM THE OPPOSITION TO THE COALITION. DEMIREL WOULD UN-
DOUBTEDLY HAVE PREFERRED TO PERSUADE AN INDEPENDENT OR
A DP DEPUTY TO SWITCH TO THE RR, BUT FINDING NO VOLUNTEERS
HE APPARENTLY ARRANGED FOR A MEMBER OF HIS OWN PARTY TO SWITCH.)

B. THE NATIONAL SALVATION PARTY (NSP) ASSEMBLY
GROUP HAS MET ALMOST EVERY DAY SINCE 14 MEMBERS WALKED
OUT OF A MEETING IN PROTEST (REF A.) THE GROUP ANNOUNCED
DECEMBER 2 THAT THEY HAD DECIDED TO DEMAND QUICK IMPLEMENTATION
OF THEIR 12 POINT MEMORANDUM FOR A BETTER FUNCTIONING OF
THE GOVERNMENT (WHICH DEMIREL AGREED TO IN NOVEMBER, BUT
HAS DELAYED IMPLEMENTING.) PRESENTLY, THE GROUP IS
DISCUSSING THE CRITICISMS LEVELED AGAINST THE PARTY ADMINIS-
TRATION FOR MAKING CONTACTS WITH THE OPPOSITION AND FOR
MAKEING COMMENTS WHICH WEAKENED THE GOVERNMENT COALITION.
NSP DEPUTY HUSAMETTIN AKMUMCU, ONE OF THE LEADERS OF THE
"DISSIDENTS," ZM DENIED RUMORS THAT SOME MEMBERS OF HIS
GROUP WERE CONSIDERING JOINING A NEW "INDEPENDENT PARTY"
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WHICH REPORTEDLY WOULD BE UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF INDEPENDENT
DEPUTY SADETTIN BILGIC AND COMPOSED OF A NUMBER OF
DEPUTIES FROM THE RR, DP, NSP AND INDEPENDENT GROUPS.
(THE JANUARY 6 CUMHURIYET REPORTS THAT CONTACTS LEADING
TO THE FORMATION OF THIS NEW PARTY WERE UNSUCCESSFUL.)

C. APPARENTLY THERE IS DISSENSION WITHIN THE RANKS
OF THE RPP AND JP AS WELL. SOME PAPERS REPORT THAT THE

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MORE LEFTIST ELEMENT OF THE RPP, THE SO-CALLED
"DEMOCRATIC LEFT" ONCE AGAIN PREVAILED OVER THE MODERATE
LEFT "SOCIAL DEMOCRATS" OF THE PARTY'S CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION
IN THE SELECTION OF CANDIDATES FOR THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY
CHAIRMANSHIP COUNCIL AND PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES. (EARLIER
THIS GROUP HAD ELECTED ITS CANDIDATES AS ASSEMBLY GROUP
VICE-CHAIRMEN). JANUARY 6 CUMHURIYET REPORTS THAT IN A
RECENT JP ASSEMBLY GROUP MEETING, THE PARTY'S LEADERSHIP
WAS TOLD BY MENDERES-ERA FORMER DEMOCRAT SITKI YIRCALI,
WHO WAS ELECTED TO THE SENATE IN OCTOBER, THAT "YOUR FATE
WILL BE WORSE THAN OURS." SENATOR KAMRAN INAN REPORTEDLY
MADE THE SAME POINTS CRITICIZING THE LEADERSHIP FOR A LACK
OF DIRECTION AT A TIME WHEN THE RPP WAS PLANNING AHEAD FOR
A FIVE-YEAR PERIOD.

D. THE NOMINATION OF SABAN KARATAS AS NEW DIRGEN OF
TURKISH RADIO AND TELEVISION (TRT) CONTINUED AS A DIVISIVE
ISSUE BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT AND PRESIDENT KORUTURK (REF B).
SEVERAL DAYS AGO, KORUTURK RETURNED THE UNSIGNED NOMINATING
DECREE TO THE GOVERNMENT WITH THE SUGGESTION THAT IT BE
SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL OF STATE (DANISTAY) FOR AN
OPINION IN LIGHT OF THE COUNCIL'S RULING THAT FORMER
DIRGEN CEM HAD BEEN REMOVED IMPROPERLY. THE GOVERNMENT
REFUSED TO ACT ON THIS RECOMMENDATION AND RETURNED THE
DECREE TO KORUTURK. NAP CHAIRMAN (AND DEP. PRIMIN)
TURKES GOT INTO THE ACT JANUARY 4 STATING THAT THE
GOVERNMENT WOULD "USE ITS POWER TO BRING KARATAS TO
OFFICE. "CERTAIN PERSONS," HE CHARGED (IN A THINLY VEILED
REFERENCE TO KORUTURK AND THE COUNCIL OF STATE) "HAVE
ALMOST BEEN MOBILIZED TO RENDER LAWS UNENFORCEABLE."
FINALLY, HURRIYET, JANUARY 7 CARRIES A REPORT THAT PRESIDENT
KORUTURK HAS SIGNED KARATAS' ASSIGNMENT DECREE.

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2. DURING THE PAST WEEK, THERE WAS NO COMMENT ON THE
POSSIBILITY OF A JP-RPP COALITION. BOTH THE JP AND RPP
SEEM TO HAVE WRITTEN OFF THE PROSPECT, AT LEAST FOR THE
PRESENT. COMMENTS BY PARTY LEADERS ONCE AGAIN RETURNED
TO THE LEVEL OF INSULT. A SAMPLING: RPP CHAIRMAN ECEVIT
ON JANUARY 5 (REF C) CHARGED THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS
EITHER THE "ORGANIZER" OF PROVOCATIONS AMONG STUDENTS
AND LABORERS, OR IT WAS "IRRESPONSIBLE ENOUGH TO PROTECT
THE ORGANIZERS. THE PRIME MINISTER ... MUST FULFILL THE
BASIC RESPONSIBILITIES OF BEING THE HEAD OF GOVERNMENT.
THE FRST OF THESE RESPONSIBILITIES IS THE INSURING OF
THE SECURITY OF LIFE. A GOVERNMENT WHICH FAILS TO DO THIS
CANNOT BE REGARDED AS A GOVERNMENT." JP EPUTY CHAIRMAN
YILDIRIM RESPONDED IN KIND JANUARY 6, ACCUSING ECEVIT OF
BEING "INVOLVED IN EVERY EVENT THAT IS AGAINST THE LEGAL

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ORDER."

3. COMMENT: WHAT THESE STIRRINGS WITHIN THE PARTIES
WILL EVENTUALLY BRING IS NOT CERTAIN BUT SOME SHORT TERM
TRENDS ARE BEGINNING TO TAKE SHAPE:

A. DEMIREL HAS REAFFIRMED HIS COMMITMENT TO HOLD HIS
COALITION TOGETHER AND REMAIN IN POWER FOR AT LEAST A
WHILE LONGER. HIS WILLINGNESS TO BOLSTER A COALITION PARTNER
AT THE EXPENSE OF HIS OWN PARTY SUGGESTS THIS, AS DOES A
PROMISE OF NEW LEGISLATION FOR A MAJOR EXPANSION OF SOCIAL SECURITY
COVERAGE ANNOUNCED BY DEPUTY PRIMIN FEYZIOGLU JANUARY 3.

B. THE RPP, WHICH WAS AT LEAST TOYING WITH THE
IDEA OF A COALITION WITH THE JP LEADING TO EARLY ELECTIONS,
HAS, IN THE FACE OF A JP REBUFF, RESUMED ITS POSITION OF
COMPLETE HOSTILITY TO DEMIREL AND HIS COALITION. IT HAS
APPARENTLY BEEN TAKING SOUNDINGS WITH DISSIDENT COALITION
PARTY DEPUTIES, INDEPENDENTS, AND DP DEPUTIES ASSESSING
THE POSSIBILITY OF FORMING AN RPP-LED COALITION SHOULD
DEMIREL FALL. RPP GROUP VICE CHAIRMAN OLCEN SAID
JANUARY 6 HIS PARTY IS "INVESTIGATING POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT
MODELS IN ORDER TO SET UP A NEW REGIME."

C. ALTHOUGH PARLIAMENT IS NOW GETTING ITSELF ORGANIZED,
IT WILL BE SOME TIME BEFORE IT GETS DOWN TO BUSINESS.
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LAW REQUIRES THAT THE BUDGET BE LEGISLATED BY BOTH HOUSES
PRIOR TO MARCH 1, AND THIS WILL BE THE MOST IMPORTANT ITEM
ON THE AGENDA. OTHER ITEMS, HOWEVER, INCLUDING A NUMBER
OF EMBARRASSING INVESTIGATORY MOTIONS CONCERNING MEMBERS OF
THE GOVERNMENT, WILL TAKE PRIORITY AND WILL THUS DELAY EARLY
ACTION ON THE BUDGET.
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